

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-01 INR-01 INRE-00 /004 W

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O R 161140Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4362

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONGEN JERUSALEM

UNCLAS BEIRUT 6281

USIA FOR IOP/M, IPS, IBS, INA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION

1. SUMMARY. BEIRUT DAILIES COMMENTING ON U.S. RECOVERY OF MAYAGUEZ FROM CAMBODIA DRAW DIFFERENT CONCLUSIONS. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE -DAILY STAR- AND PRO-IRAQ "BEYRUT" SEE IT AS DEMONSTRATION THAT "AMERICA REMAINS A POWER TO RECKON WITH" ANYWHERE IN WORLD. PRO-LIBYA "AS SAFIR" PREDICTS IT WILL RESULT IN SETBACK FOR U.S. VIA "POLITICAL CRISES IN THAILAND AND OTHER REGIMES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA." END SUMMARY.

2. COMMENTING ON MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT, INDEPENDENT ENGLISH-LANGUAGE "DAILY STAR" WROTE: "CAMBODIA'S KHMER ROUGE HAS MISCALCULATED. IN EUPHORIA OF VICTORY THEY BELIEVED THEIR OWN CLAIMS THAT U.S. WAS PAPER TIGER OR TOOTHLESS LION. RESULT HAS BEEN AN UNNECESSARY HUMILIATION FOR NEW RULERS OF PHNOM PENH AS AMERICANS MOUNTED AN AIR-SEA OPERATION TO RESCUE U.S. FREIGHTER IN GULF OF THAILAND. FOR CAMBODIA, LESSON TO BE LEARNED IS FOR ONE TO KNOW ONE'S LIMITS AND LIMITATIONS; FOR REST OF WORLD, THAT AMERICA REMAINS A POWER TO RECKON WITH OUTSIDE CONFINES OF U.S. ITSELF. ARABS, ESPECIALLY PALESTINIANS, MIGHT HAVE COME TO WRONG CONCLUSIONS

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WITH AMERICA'S IGNOBLE DEPARTURE FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA. "TODAY

VIETNAM, TOMORROW PALESTINE', IS A POPULAR, BUT PERHAPS MISLEADING SLOGAN IF TAKEN TO REFLECT REALITIES OF WORLD SITUATION. OPERATION TO RELEASE FREIGHTER HAS UNDERLINED AMERICA'S WILLINGNESS -- ITS ABILITY HAS NEVER BEEN IN DOUBT -- TO INTERFERE IF ITS VITAL INTERESTS ARE ENDANGERED... IT WILL BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS... TO ASSUME THAT U.S. HAS FINALLY DISCARDED ISRAEL AS A VITAL INTEREST. BECAUSE IF ARABS BASE THEIR CALCULATIONS ON SUCH A HYPOTHESIS AND THEY ARE PROVED WRONG, THEY WILL LOSE FAR MORE THAN A MISERABLE FREIGHTER."

3. ADNAN BADR OF PRO-IRAQ "BEYRUT" COMMENTS: "AMERICAN REACTION TO AMERICAN MILITARY OPERATION IN CAMBODIA IS MAINLY THAT IT WAS 'GOOD OPPORTUNITY' FOR PRESIDENT TO REASSERT, AFTER CRUSHING DEFEAT IN CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM, THAT HIS COUNTRY IS STILL A MAJOR POWER TO RECKON WITH ANYWHERE IN WORLD AND IS ABLE TO IMPOSE ITS 'DIGNITY' AND RUSH TO AID OF ITS ALLIES. 'GOODNESS' OF THIS OPPORTUNITY LIES IN FACT THAT IT CAME ON EVE OF AMERICAN PRESIDENT'S DEPARTURE FOR EUROPE WHERE HE WILL MEET HIS EUROPEAN ALLIES AND EMPHASIZE TO THEM THAT THEY CONTINUE TO BE, IN WORDS OF DR. KISSINGER, 'ABSOLUTE PRIORITY' AS FAR AS AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED. PRESIDENT FORD WILL THEN MEET WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AND REITERATE THAT AMERICAN 'PEACE' EFFORTS IN MIDEAST REQUIRE 'CONCESSIONS BY BOTH PARTIES', MEANING MORE ARAB CONCESSIONS. AFTER THAT HE WILL MEET WITH ISRAELI PREMIER RABIN AND EMPHASIZE TO HIM THAT ISRAEL'S FEAR THAT EXPERIMENT OF PUPPET SAIGON REGIME WILL BE REPEATED WITH ISRAEL IS UNFOUNDED AND THAT U.S. WILL GIVE MORE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC BACKING TO ZIONIST STRUCTURE."

4. COMMENTING ON SAME SUBJECT, SAID MIHYO OF PRO-LIBYAN "AS SAFIR" WRITES: "SHIP INCIDENT AFFIRMS ONCE AGAIN THAT BATTLE OF INDOCHINA PEOPLE HAS NOT ENDED WITH LIBERATION OF VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND WHAT REMAINS OF LAOS... IT CAN BE PREDICTED, AS OF NOW, THAT MORAL LEVERAGE WHICH WASHINGTON WANTED TO HAVE AS RESULT OF OPERATION OF SPY SHIP, WILL BE TRANSFORMED INTO QUICK MATERIAL SETBACKS IN FORM OF SUFFOCATING POLITICAL CRISES IN THAILAND AND OTHER REGIMES IN SE ASIA. THESE REGIMES HAVE REALIZED SERIOUS DIMENSIONS OF THEIR CONVERSION INTO SPEARHEAD OF DEFEATED IMPERIALISM AGAINST TRIUMPHANT PEOPLE OF INDOCHINA."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, SHIP DETENTION, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, MAYAGUEZ SS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BEIRUT06281
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750172-0777
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750542/aaaablmv.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUL 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <06 FEB 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEDIA REACTION
TAGS: PFOR, US, LE
To: USIA STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006